

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: A.F. Dalia et al. Attorney Docket No.: MSFT120701
Application No.: 10/606,626 Art Unit: 2145 / Confirmation No: 5035
Filed: June 25, 2003 Examiner: J.R. Swearingen
Title: LOOKUP PARTITIONING STORAGE SYSTEM AND METHOD

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Seattle, Washington 98101

April 19, 2007

TO THE COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS:

Applicants respectfully traverse the restriction requirement set forth in the Office Action of March 21, 2007 ("Office Action"), for the reasons set forth below.

The Office Action includes two claim groupings—Claims 1-13 and 34-43, stated to be drawn to a network access system, classified in Class 709, Subclass 225, and Claims 14-33 and 44-49, stated to be drawn to a load balancing system for network data transfer, classified in Class 709, Subclass 232. As noted during a telephone call to Examiner Swearingen on April 5, 2007, and in a subsequent telephone message, many of the claims in the second group, in particular, Claims 14-23 and 28-31, do not include a load balancing system. For example, Claim 14 reads as follows:

14. A computer implemented method of managing access to a storage resource for one of a plurality of network-based applications in a multiple server storage system, the method comprising:

obtaining a resource identifier associated with the storage resource from a front end server;

utilizing said resource identifier to locate in a lookup store of a lookup partitioning service server, a partition of a storage server, where said storage resource is located; and

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granting access to the storage resource by providing said location of said partition of said storage server to said front end server.

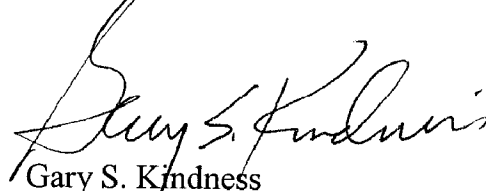
While Claim 24, which depends from Claim 14, includes a calculating and load balancing factor limitation, as noted above Claim 14 is not limited to load balancing. More specifically, while Claim 14 could be included in a load balancing system, it does not, *per se*, include a load balancing recitation. As a result, applicants respectfully request that either the restriction requirement be withdrawn or that the claims be regrouped in a more appropriate manner.

While applicants traverse the restriction requirement, in order to be fully responsive, applicants elect for prosecution in this application the first group of claims, *i.e.*, Claims 1-13 and 34-43. Applicants suggest that Claims 14-23 and 28-31 be added to this group if the restriction requirement is maintained.

If Examiner Swearingen has any questions, he is invited to contact applicants' attorney at the number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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